

# Hillingdon Narrowboats Association

## Pisces Handover Manual

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Approver:        Dave Wright        [dave.wright@mail.hna.org.uk](mailto:dave.wright@mail.hna.org.uk)

# Welcome!

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On behalf of Hillingdon Narrowboats Association, I'd like to thank you for choosing to hire Pisces. No matter which boat you've hired, or the length of your trip, we're sure that you'll have a fantastic time exploring the waterways around this part of the country.

Before we confirmed your booking, we'll have made sure that you are competent to steer a narrowboat: this may have been as part of our training scheme, or, if you already have boating experience, we may have asked you to spend an hour or two with us to so that we be sure of your skills whilst afloat. Alternatively, you may have chosen to have an HNA-certificated steerer come with you, either for all, or just part, of your trip.

Please take the time to read this short manual, which covers everything we'll have told you during the handover process. We do realise that you probably want to get straight into boating, but spending 20-30 minutes just to familiarise yourself with the boat, and the immediate area, is time well spent.

If you have any problems during your hire period, please do contact us using the details in the 'Get in Touch' section. Many problems can be resolved very quickly, or we might be able to offer advice for events outside of our control. Whatever, if you have any queries at all, please do get in touch quickly, so we can have you on your way again as quickly as possible.

Depending on the route you take, look out for the Hanging Monkey, just north of our boathouse; see also if you can spot Spiderman if you head into Little Venice. You might see the floating Chinese Restaurant, an abundance of coconuts, and – if you go through the Islington tunnel - absolutely nothing but pitch black!

Thanks again for choosing Hillingdon Narrowboats. All that remains is for me to wish you a safe and pleasant trip, as you begin your journey on the water.

Best wishes

*Dave*

Dave Wright

Project Manager, Hillingdon Narrowboats

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# If You Read Nothing Else...

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...please read this section. It covers the basics you really need to know.

## Water

The boat has a large tank of potable water. This water may have a slightly unusual taste, but it's safe to drink, brush teeth with, and can be used for cooking. For trips of more than a day, we would suggest you top up with water once a day: the basic rule of thumb is to top up when you can, not when you have to. A fully empty tank can take 30-45 minutes to refill completely. The water refill inlet is on the starboard gunnel at the front of the boat. The Nicholson's Guide on the boat will identify the location of water points along the canal.

## Diesel

Prior to your trip, the boat will have been refilled with diesel. For cruises of more than 4-5 days, we'd recommend checking the amount of fuel remaining using the dip stick, which has the EMPTY level clearly marked. A good guide is a consumption of one inch of fuel per day (approx. 6 hours).

## Gas

There are three gas bottles on board, stored at the gas locker in the very front of the boat. Two bottles are connected: the third is spare. If one bottle runs out, the automatic changeover will switch to the other. If both bottles are empty, you should connect the spare bottle. Remember to turn off the old bottle before disconnecting it, and to turn on the new bottle after it's connected. **Gas bottles have a LEFT-HAND thread,** and can be hand tightened.

In the event of a gas leak, turn off both bottles, open doors and windows and do not operate any light switches, either off or on. Move to boat to the bank, moor it safely and switch off the engine, and turn off the power isolators in the engine compartment. Ventilate the boat, and investigate the cause of the leak. Contact HNA for further advice.

## Waste Water

Sink and shower water is discharged into the canal. Toilet waste is collected in tanks in the bottom of the boat, and should be of sufficient capacity for a trip of less than a week. An indication of a full toilet tank would be waste water in the bottom of the toilet bowl. Use the other toilet until you can obtain a pump out (HNA will reimburse, with receipts) one pump out per hire.

## Fire

Fire extinguishers and blankets are on the boat. Familiarise yourself with their locations and operating instruction. HNA's advice is to only fight fire if you can safely do so easily. Your priority should be to get yourself and passengers to safety – at least 3-4 boat lengths away - before giving any consideration to extinguishing the fire.

# Daily Checks.

Before commencing each day's journey, and whilst the engine is cold, you should check the following areas in and around the engine room.

Before commencing these checks, for safety reasons make sure that you have the battery isolators turned off and remove the keys, to prevent any other person starting the engine whilst these checks are being carried out.

## Overview and Isolators

The battery isolators are located in the engine room on the left hand side see picture. To turn on the batteries turn the knob  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn clockwise. It is normal for the engine compartment to have a mix of oil and water in the bottom. The boat is fitted with an automatic bilge pump which will start to operate if water levels get too high. However, if the battery isolator (see below) is turned off, the bilge pump will not operate. If there is significant water in the engine compartment, and the battery isolator is turned off, you may wish to turn it on for a few minutes (see below) to pump out the engine bay.



## Oil Level

The dipstick is on the side of the engine. The oil will appear black, and should be between half and three-quarters of the way up to flat end of the dip stick.

In the unlikely event that it is less than half way, do not start the engine, top up with the oil provided. The filler cap is located on the top of the engine (yellow arrow)



**Pisces has an air cooled engine.**

## Fan Belts

The fan belt is found towards the front of the engine, and should be checked to ensure they are not overly loose. The best way to do this is to see how much 'play' there is in the belt, and this should typically be around half an inch either way. If the belt is excessively loose, contact HNA for advice. Check also for any obvious visual tears or breaks in the belt, and again, if you have any concerns, contact HNA for advice.



### Stern Gland

To prevent water entering the back cabin bilge via the prop-shaft hole, the stern gland is pumped with grease both before and after a day's running time. To do this, simply twist the handle on top of the stern gland clockwise firmly, until it is hand-tight. It is located under the steerers step in the back cabin.

Normally, this can take anywhere between a quarter of a turn and a couple of turns, depending on the age of the stern gland packing. If you can continue turning without feeling any significant resistance or you can see grease escaping from any of the fittings, contact HNA for advice.



### Prop Clearing

Pisces being an ex-working boat does not have a weed hatch for clearing The Blade (propeller) if it should get fouled try putting the boat in reverse To throw off any rubbish, if this does not work, there is a blade clearer on the roof of the boat. It is heavy so not to be used by children. Stop the engine before use and try to find the propeller. It may be necessary to push the boat out to gain access. A low bank is best if possible. You may need to hold the boat out with the boat hook.



# Reminders

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This concludes the checks within the engine compartment, so you should now replace the engine bay covers.

A checklist is provided to assist you with these checks.

## Things to do every morning

1. Oil Level – half way
2. Fan belt tension – approximately half-inch in both directions
3. Stern Gland – tighten gently

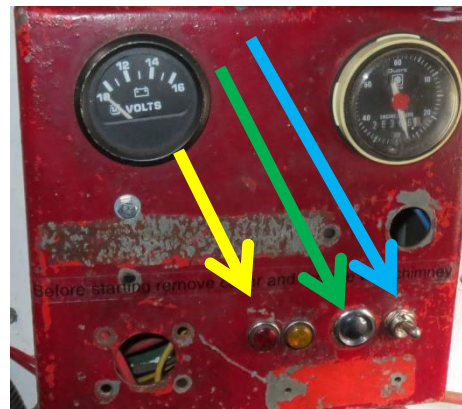
## Things to do every night

- 1 Bring tiller and pin inside.
- 2 Stern Gland – tighten gently
- 3 When mooring overnight, in less-salubrious areas, remove any loose items from the roof,

# Starting and Stopping the Engine.

## To start the Engine:

1. Ensure the battery isolators are turned on. These would only normally be in the off position when you pick up your boat.
2. Perform the daily checks:
  - a. Fan belt tension
  - b. Oil level
  - c. Tighten stern-gland greaser as necessary
3. Remove the exhaust cap (yellow arrow)
4. Put exhaust pipe on
5. Apply some throttle, making sure that you disengage the gears first by pushing the red button in the centre of the morse control as per picture. (green arrow)  
turn on the ignition switch (blue arrow)  
Push starter button until engine starts and the revs pick up.(green arrow)
6. Slowly take the engine to full revs, until the red light goes out (yellow arrow)and then back to tickover
7. Check for excessive engine smoke.



## To stop the Engine:

1. Ensure the boat is secured, front a rear, with ropes
2. Pull stop button until engine stops and then turn of the ignition switch.

**If you are stopping the boat for the day, check the stern-glad greaser and tighten as necessary.**

# ENGINE ROOM and BACK CABIN

In the engine room there are two fuse boards one for the Skippers cabin and the other for the rest of the boat. These should not give any problems or be touched.



In the back cabin there is an Epping range as was used in working boat days Please treat this with respect as a replacement can cost many £1000s Remember to put chimney cover on after use and remove it before you light the range or you will be smoked out!

We restored the cabin to look as original as possible please look after it.



# On-board Equipment

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On board, you'll find the following items of equipment, which you'll use to operate the boat

The keys supplied with the boat will operate the the front cabin doors, and British Waterways water taps, anti-vandal locks and other BWB facilities (showers, toilets, gates, etc). Additionally, there is another BWB key and a tank (water, grey-waste pump out) key on a separate keyring in the steerer's cabin,

## Tiller and Pin

The tiller should always be removed from the boat at night and when unattended. Being made of brass, it is of interest to passing thieves, and the boat will be impossible to steer without it. Ensure that you don't drop the pin into the canal.

## Mooring Pins (x2) and Club Hammer

Like tent-pegs, these can be used to tie up the boat if you moor where no bollards or rings are available.

## Mooring Clips (x2)

These can be used on some parts of the canal, and slip behind the metal pilings of the canal edge and allow you to tie your mooring line to them.

## Windlasses (x3)

Used for operating lock paddles. Ensure that you use the smaller of the two holes to operate the lock spindles, to avoid damage to either the windlass or the spindle.

## Nicholson's Waterways Guide and Map Case

The Nicholson's Guide is the de-facto guide to the UK's canal network, and shows winding (turn-a- round) points, pump-out stations and water taps along the canal, as well as locks, marinas and other local points of interest.

## Hosepipe

Stored in the gas locker at the front of the boat, this is used to refill the water tanks as and when needed (see later).

Other equipment which may be available (check log book):

Magnet and line – which may be useful for retrieving a lost windlass from a lock should it go overboard. Alternatively, an item for entertainment whilst waiting for a lock to fill or empty – you might get lucky!

Boathook and pole – the boathook can be used for retrieving floating items from the canal, or removing obstructions (branches, debris, etc). The pole can be used to push the boat off of a mud bank should you get stuck. Always use the pole to push with, never to lever, as it will break if used in this manner.

Emergency tool box containing screw drivers pliers and other useful tools for use in an emergency.

# Steering

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You will have been assessed as competent by HNA prior to your hire. However, it's worth reinforcing a few basics:

Keep to the centre of the canal, moving to the right when an oncoming boat is approaching. You should pass left-side to left-side.

Familiarise yourself with the pivot point of the boat shortly after departure, so you can better estimate when to commence a turn. Remember, a very short blast of full power during a turn will make the boat turn sharper, without increasing forward speed.

Steering in reverse is usually ineffective. It's often best, when reversing, to give short blasts of forward throttle, with the tiller in the appropriate position, to correct your direction.

If you run aground, the best advice is to try to reverse off of the obstruction, and get the back of your boat into deeper water. Use boat poles to push the boat off. In the case of serious grounding, contact HNA for advice before considering asking a passing boat to tow you off.

Do not attempt to overtake unless the boat in front indicates that he wishes you to do so. Regardless, don't overtake under bridges, on bends, in shallow water, or when passing moored boats.

Be courteous to other waterway users. Take your turn at locks, and close gates and paddles unless another boat is approaching or signs direct you otherwise.

The maximum speed on the canal system should be considered to be 4mph. In practice, it'll often be slower than this. You should avoid creating a breaking wash, going at moored boats and fishermen faster than tickover, and be conscious that it is possible to dislodge boats poorly moored with excessive speed. Slow down to tickover when passing moored boats, at least 3-4 boat lengths before you get to them.

To stop, or to slow down quickly, use a burst of reverse until the boat comes to a stop. Note that this may cause the boat to veer off course slightly. Steering ability is significantly reduced when moving forward in neutral, when, for example, slowing gradually.

# Safety

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## Locks

At locks, pay close attention to use of the windlass on the lock spindles using the small hole of the windlass when ever possible : keep tight hold of it when raising or lowering paddles, remember the use of the safety catch, and never leave a windlass on a spindle.

In the event of a man overboard in a lock, drop all paddles immediately, and seek to recover the casualty.

Be aware of the location of the cill when lowering the boat in a lock, and keep well forward. If the back of the boat does get caught, immediately close the lower paddles, and add water by opening the upper paddles very slowly to re-float the boat.

## Man Overboard

If anyone should fall overboard, immediately put the engine into neutral. Talk to the casualty, and if possible, instruct him to stand up and walk to the bank. Never attempt to recover the person onto the boat unless there are no alternatives, and only then, do so at the rear of the boat. Ensure anyone who does fall in showers as soon as possible, and keep them warm. Advise them to visit their doctor if they exhibit any flu-like symptoms in the following 3-4 weeks, and to tell their doctor they have been exposed to canal water, due to the risks of Weil's disease.

## Accidents and Emergencies

In the event of needing medical attention, use the Nicholson's Guide to identify your location and nearest point of access, and relay this to the 999 operator.

## Life Jackets

HNA will make available life jackets for you upon request. The decision to wear these rests with the hirer and his/her passengers. Life jackets, if worn, should not be covered by coats, jackets, etc, and should always be the outermost item of clothing worn. HNA will charge for any life jacket inflations caused by anything other than a person overboard.

## Security

Ensure the boat is locked – front and rear – and any side hatches are also secured, windows closed, curtains drawn and any valuables removed with you when leaving the boat.

# Mooring

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As a reminder, you shouldn't moor in the following places:

- Under bridges
- Across weirs
- In locks or on lock moorings
- On water points or facilities moorings
- In winding holes
- On corners
- Anywhere other than the tow-path side, unless signs indicate you can.

When mooring, use ropes front and back, leading away from the boat at approximately 45 degrees. It's often best to bring the rope back to the boat and secure it to a t-stud on the boat with a secure hitch, preferably the boatmans' hitch.

If you moor using mooring pins, ensure that these are driven in using a mallet at an angle of 45 degrees. Pins and ropes should not obstruct the tow path. It is often useful to lead the rope through the ring on the mooring pin, so that if it does work loose, it won't be lost.

# Mooring at HNA's Boathouse

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HNA Boathouse is situated not, as you may think, on the Grand Union Canal, but on a side stream along and joining the canal. This side stream can be fast flowing especially after rain and can cause problems for the most experienced steerer unless they know the following simple rules.

## **Coming downstream from Springwell**

Slow the boat down very early.

Get mooring rope ready at rear of boat

Swing in rear/stern of boat to mooring and hold back till a rope is taken off and made fast.

The current will slowly bring in the front of boat to enable a rope to be taken off and secured.

Then make fast the bow

## **Upstream from Coppermill Lock**

Bring front into mooring slowly and early till you have secured the bow.

Allow the current to bring in the rear/stern.

# How Do I...

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## Extra information and reminders

### Gas

Sufficient gas will be provided for your hire. Three bottles are provided, of which two will be connected at any one time via an automatic valve. If you need to change an empty bottle, an appropriately sized spanner is provided in the gas locker. Gas bottles have a left-handed (ie: the reverse of normal) thread, so to unscrew the valve, you need to turn it CLOCKWISE, and to screw on the new valve, you need to turn it ANTI-CLOCKWISE.

### Water

The freshwater tank will hold enough for several days cruising, although it is worth topping up every couple of days: refill when you can, not when you need to. The water filler cap is at the front of the boat, next to the gas locker. Use the Nicholson's Guide to identify where your next water tap is – they are generally adjacent to locks. Most taps will require the BWB key to unlock them – ensure they are locked when you have finished. Place the reel at the tap and extend the hose towards the boat. The white tank key, like a flat bladed screwdriver, is used to open the water tank cap. It can take 30-45 minutes to refill a completely empty water tank. Water is delivered to the tap via a flow-activated pump situated under the floor. It is normal to hear the pump activate when either the hot or cold taps, or the toilet flush, are activated. An intermittently pulsing pump is an indication of a tap being left on or a toilet flushing.

### Water Heating

The water heater is a hot water on demand boiler in the galley area it has a pilot light which may occasionally get blown out, the instructions for relighting are on the boiler.

### Heating system

Pisces has a hot air heating system it has a controller on the pillar by the stainless steel work top in the galley. It has two red sliders, keep the left hand side one slid to the right. The right hand slide has 3 positions top is hot air middle is off and bottom is also off. Set the room temperature on the dial.

### Waste Water

Both toilets have their own waste-water tanks under the boat, and have sufficient capacity for several days. It is unlikely that you will need to empty these during your hire, but if so, you can seek the advice of a local marina or other facility offering pump-out facilities. Expect to pay £15-£20 for a pump out if needed, otherwise both tanks will be emptied at the return of the boat. Please don't place any items into the toilet other than toilet tissue as this may block the pump-out facility at HNA and result in the loss of your deposit. Water from the kitchen sink, and the two wash sinks, are discharged into the canal.

To pump out the shower press the switch in the shower room.

### Electricity

The boat has a 12v DC battery-backed system supporting the lights, fridge and freshwater pump, which is recharged when the boat's engine is running. Excessive use of lighting along with short engine running hours will result in a flat battery. If this happens, run the boat's engine for a period of time to recharge batteries and to provide internal lighting

Additional batteries for medical reasons (such as CPAP machines for sleep apnoea) can be provided along with a 12v AC inverter to produce a 240v AC supply, and are independent of the boat's 12v system.

### Diesel

Fuel consumption is minimal on a narrowboat, probably in the region of 1.0 – 1.5 litres per hour. Assuming an eight-hour cruising day, and a 100 litre diesel tank, you can expect to get around 8-12 days worth of cruising time in between fill-ups. HNA will ensure you have sufficient fuel to last your hire period, based on the duration and expected distance of your trip.

**Toilets**

To flush the toilet, using your foot, push the foot-pedal down. This will open the trap in the toilet, and add a small amount of water. If more water is required, again using your foot, lift the pedal up. Repeat as necessary. A toilet brush is provided for use if necessary.

Ensure that the toilet flush pedal returns to the centre OFF position when finished, otherwise the contents of the fresh water tank will be drained into the toilet tank, causing it to overflow.

Please remember not to place any items other than toilet tissue into the toilets.

**Safety**

Fire extinguishers are provided in the steerer's cabin, next to the step, in the kitchen area, opposite the stove, and in the forward cabin. A fire-blanket is also provided in the kitchen area.

A carbon monoxide monitoring device is installed in the kitchen. In the event of it sounding, exit the boat immediately and seek fresh air and medical advice if necessary.

**Security**

At night, and when leaving the boat unattended, ensure:

1. All hatches are closed and bolted, including the hatch in the steerer's cabin.
2. Windows are shut and locked.
3. Curtains on the tow-path side are drawn.
4. All taps are turned off.
5. The toilet flush lever is in the middle position.
6. The tiller and pin are removed and stored in the steerer's cabin.
7. All lights are turned off.

Entrance and exit to the boat is via the front cabin or Steerers Cabin with permission.

If mooring in areas prone to vandalism, it is often wise to take further precautions:

Remove items from the roof, such as life-rings, boathook and pole.

Consider mooring the boat by looping around a mooring bollard and securing the rope back to the boat, rather than on the bollard.

Consider using cable ties to secure the rope, making it significantly more difficult to be cast off.

Ensure any safety devices are returned to the correct place when starting the cruise afterwards.

**Lifejackets**

HNA will provide an appropriate number of lifejackets along with spares, based on the number of passengers and crew on board. HNA does not have a policy on whether passengers and crew should wear lifejackets, but would expect the hirer to perform their own risk assessment and make their own informed decision based on the result of the assessment.

# At the End of Your Hire Period

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Hopefully, you've had a successful cruise. When you return the boat, we'd appreciate it if you could run through the brief check list:

1. Remove all personal possessions, rubbish (including waste bins in toilets) and surplus food/liquids.
2. You should aim to leave the boat as you found it. Waste bins are available at HNA's boathouse for any waste.
3. Ensure the boat is cleaned, that any cooking or cutlery items are washed, dried, and returned to their correct place.
4. Make sure the fridge is emptied, and that the door is left open.
5. Leave the gas on and the pilot light on the water heater lit, but turn the battery power off in the engine compartment.
6. Bring in the tiller and pin and stow in the steerer's cabin.
7. Ensure all windlasses, mooring pins, mooring clips, hammers, and maps are accounted for.
8. Report any problems to a member of HNA's team, or by filling in the log book provided.
9. Leave the keys in the ignition, or as previously directed by HNA, and padlock the door.

# If Things go Wrong...

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## Accidents

In the event of an accident involving another boat, **do not admit liability**. Remain calm and polite and obtain the following information:

1. The name of the other boat and its registration number.
2. The owner's name and address.
3. The skipper's name and address.
4. The names and addresses of any witnesses.
5. The date, time and location of the incident.
6. Write a report of how and why the incident happened.

Contact HNA immediately for further advice.

## Breakdown

The most common problem you'll encounter is an obstruction of the propeller (blade). Moor up, stop the engine and remove the key, and then proceed to remove any debris around the blade. On some sections of the canal, this can need doing with monotonous regularity.

In the event of engine failure, moor up, and contact HNA. Most problems can be rectified easily.

## Loss or Damage

Again, contact HNA at the earliest opportunity. In some instances, we may need to make a police report, and this may require a witness statement. Wilful damage caused by you or your party will normally be chargeable.

# Emergency Services: 999 or 112

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When calling either the CRT Emergency number, or the traditional Emergency Services, you should give your location as best you can based on bridge number, lock names/numbers or nearest landmarks

For incidents such as dangerously damaged locks, bridges or tunnels, or for boats trapped in weirs or locks, or serious pollution, contact the CRT Emergency number. For non-urgent issues, such as fly tipping, vandalism, low or high water levels, use the CRT non-Emergency number.

For any boat problems, or to notify HNA that you will be significantly late in returning the boat, please try the HNA Office number first, (01895 823 582) followed by the HNA Out of Hours Emergency number if there is no reply. (07860 857 877)

**Canal and River Trust Emergency Telephone Number** Tel: 0800 47 999 47  
(Emergencies, damaged locks/bridge/tunnel, trapped boats)

# Summary

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You are **not permitted** to cruise on tidal waters, without the express permission of HNA, and agreed in advance of your hire.

Night cruising is **not permitted without the express permission** of the Chairman or Project Manager of HNA. Permission may be granted taking into account your experience, the section of canal you're on, weather conditions, your familiarity with the section of canal, the numbers and age of your passengers, and whether you need to pass through any locks.

**Keep your speed down.** All boats carry HNA's name and phone number, and we do receive reports of speeding boats. Repeated reports of a group speeding may result in early termination of your hire.

**Dispose of all rubbish in approved waste facilities,** or retain it on board to dispose of back at HNA.

You are expected **to return your boat in the same clean and tidy condition** in which you took over it. A boat in a dirty condition will attract an additional cleaning charge.

Ensure all crew and passengers are given **HNA's Safety Briefing** before departure. This is for everyone's benefit, even those who have used our boats before.

Treat other boaters as you would wish to be treated yourself. **Show courtesy and consideration,** and remember that voices or music travel great distances over water, especially at night.

# Canal Glossary

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Aft / stern	Back of a boat.
Air draft	The height of the boat taken from the waterline to the highest fixed point on the boat (so you won't hit a low bridge).
Beam	A boat's width.
Bow	Pointed front of the boat.
Breasted pair	Two boats tied together.
Butty boat	A narrowboat without an engine, usually towed behind or alongside a powered narrowboat, has an open hold to carry cargo.
BWB key / Watermate key	Opens sanitary stations, waterpoints and some swing bridges and locks.
Cill	Doorsteps inside the lock, on which the lock gates sit.
Counter	Flat area below the water line above the swim.
Cut	Another term for a canal: workers cut the ditches to make the canals.
Draft	The depth of a boat / how deep it is under water.
Elsan disposal	Place to empty disposable toilets.
Galley	A boat's kitchen.
Gangplank	A plank used for getting on and off when the boat won't quite reach the bank.
Gunwale	The top edge of the hull where it joins the cabin side, pronounced 'gunnel' as in tunnel.
Hull	The main body of a boat, not including the cabin.
Junction	Where two or more canals meet.
Keel cooled	A closed system, a slab tank (narrow & baffled) is welded to the inside (normally) of the swim, engine cooling water is then circulated through it. (does the same job as the radiator on a car).
Linear moorings	Moorings along the canal where the boat is tied parallel to the towpath.
Lock gates	The mechanism that lets a boat into and out of a lock and also holds the water back
Navigation lights	Used in poor visibility on rivers to show other boats where you are and what direction you are going in. White lights – front and back; green light - right hand side; red light - left hand side.
Offline moorings	Moorings in a basin / marina etc. i.e. Not along the actual canal.
Online moorings	Moorings along the canal.
Paddles	Trapdoors in the lock gate or side of the wall of the lock which let water in and out of the lock (Also known as a sluice).
Port or Port side	Left-hand side when standing at the stern facing forward (towards the frontend)
Pound	A section of waterway between locks.
Pump out	The facility to empty toilets that have a fixed holding tank.
Raw water cooled	Canal water is drawn in via a mud box (normally a watertight container large enough to allow the incoming water time to settle) before being pumped around the engine to cool it then returned to the canal.
Restriction	When maintenance work is carried out on a waterway, but the navigation doesn't have to be closed. Boaters may need to follow special instructions, or be delayed for a certain amount of time etc.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Rudder	Used to steer the boat, it is attached to the back of a boat and into the water.
Screw	The propeller which makes the boat go.
Skeg	A steel horizontal bar welded to the base plate (normally in channel form) protruding from the stern to carry the lower end of the rudder post and bearing, it also gives some protection to the propeller.
Skipper	The captain or person in charge of the boat.
Sluice	Trapdoors in the lock gate or side of the wall of the lock which let water in and out of the lock (Also known as paddles).
Stake	Known as mooring pins, you hammer into the ground to tie to tie the boat to the bank (used when there are no mooring rings).
Starboard or starboard side	Right-hand side when standing at the stern facing forward (towards the frontend)
Stern	The back of a boat.
Stern-gear	The propeller, propeller shaft, sterntube, sterntube bearing, and stuffing box or packing gland (an adjustable gland to help keep water out of the engine space bilge).
Stern-gland Greaser	Tube full of grease which is packed around the sterntube to prevent water seeping into the boat. Checked twice daily.
Stoppages	When work/maintenance is taking place on a waterway, a section of it may need to be closed to boaters for a certain length of time
Summit	The highest section of a canal above the top lock.
Swan neck	The S shaped steel bar welded to the rudder post to which the tiller bar is fitted (the brass shiny stick with a wooden handle on the end) on a motor boat.
Swim	The after (back) underwater part of the hull that goes to a point to allow a cleaner flow of water over the propeller.
Tiller	Attached to the rudder to control steerage through the rudder.
Transom	The normally rounded after (back) part of the boat above the water where the steerer stands.
Tumblehome	The amount a cabin side slopes inwards (to give more bridge clearance).
Tunnel light	Large beam, like a car headlight, for use in tunnels to see the way and to be seen by on-coming boats.
Waterline	The line on the boats hull where it floats.
Weir	An artificial waterfall often built so the river or canal can run around a lock.
Winding hole	A place on the water broad enough to turn the boat around.
Windlass	A spanner-like tool used to open lock paddles or sluices.
Windlass or lock key	A cranked handle for opening and closing lock paddles.

# Get in Touch

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- Hillingdon Narrowboats Association
  - Web: [www.hna.org.uk](http://www.hna.org.uk)
  - Tel: 01895 823 582 (office hours) or 07860 857 877 (out of hours)
  
- Canal & River Trust
  - Web: [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk)
  - Tel: 0800 47 999 47 (Emergencies, damaged locks/bridge/tunnel, trapped boats)
  
- Thames Barrier Navigation (London VTS)
  - Tel: 0208 855 0315
  - VHF: Channel 14, call sign "London VTS"
  
- Thames Lock, Limehouse
  - Tel: 0207 308 9930
  - VHF: Channel 80, call sign "Limehouse Marina"
  
- Thames Lock, Brentford
  - Tel: 0208 568 2779
  
- Thames Lock, Teddington
  - Tel: 0208 940 8723

# HNA Safety Briefing Notes

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**To be given before moving off to all on trip including to other leaders and Skippers.**

## Welcome

Welcome the Group and explain who you are and your role on the trip. Explain that safety is your prime responsibility. To ensure that the trip is safe and fun a few rules are necessary but these should not stop any fun on the trip just keep everyone safe.

- There should be no running inside the boat and the gangways should be kept clear of shoes, sleeping bags clothes etc.
- The gunwales should not be used for getting from front to back of boat except on the Skippers say so.
- Standing on the gunwales is unnecessary and dangerous especially when going into a lock.
- Standing on the roof or moving from boat to boat when the boat is in a lock is highly dangerous: if you should fall in there may be nowhere for you to surface and currents in a lock are very strong.
- To get from the front to the back of the boat, it is safest to walk through the boat. If allowed by the skipper it is possible to walk along the roof.
- Do not hang over the side keep arms, legs, etc inside the profile of the boat as we will be going through bridge holes, locks and passing other boats.
- If allowed on the roof face forward and keep an eye out for bridges and if told duck or get down lay flat immediately don't look around so see why.
- Make sure that you only put what you have eaten down toilets as they are pumped out when the trip ends and anything else will block the pump-out system.
- When boat is stopping or approaching a lock or bank never jump off boat until it has stopped then check with Skipper to see if it is safe to step off.
- If given or thrown a rope only pull it when told to do so by the Skipper. Otherwise just hold it.
- Tie up the boat only when told to do so, and keep your fingers away from the bollard as they can get jammed in the rope.
- If a fire should break out Shout **FIRE** and then go to either end of boat; if possible go to the front of the boat. The Skipper will direct the boat towards the bank.
- Never rock the boat unless required to do so by Skipper as things may spill or fall off the cooker.

# On arrival at the first lock

Get everybody including other leaders off the boat, and walk to the lock. Explain that all passengers and crew are responsible for everyone else's safety and everyone should keep eyes peeled for danger, such as safety catches not on, or for people running.

For experienced groups

- Remind about ground paddles first and the danger of opening gate paddles too early and to check whether any boats are coming before turning locks around.

For inexperienced groups

- Explain the workings of a lock and NEVER to remove hands from windlass when it is on the lock spindle. Show the workings of safety catches.
- There are many trip hazards around the lock so walk and keep eyes peeled.
- Check that gates are closed and paddles down at other end of lock before opening paddles.
- Always remove windlass from lock spindle when finished.

## Man Overboard Drill

If anyone should fall overboard or into a lock shout very loudly **MAN OVERBOARD** and keep looking and pointing at the person that fell in. If they can't be seen look at where they fell in. Make sure the Skipper knows what has happened and obey Skippers commands. He will make sure the boat propeller stops turning, will take command and arrange rescue.

- Do not grab or pull person out of water as this may injure them.
- If you should fall into the canal swim away from the boat or walk to the bank.
- If someone falls into a lock drop all paddles straight away and try to see where person is in the lock they may not be able to surface and could be trapped under the boat. Alert the Skipper and obey instructions.

# Sound Signals on the Inland Waterways

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A Blast = 1 second

1 Blast = going to the right

2 Blasts = going to the left

3 Blasts = I'm trying to stop or go backwards

4 Blasts pause 1 Blast = turning round to the right

4 Blasts pause 2 Blasts = turning round to the left

5 Blasts = your intentions are unclear or are you taking sufficient avoiding actions?

1 Extra Long Blast ( 4 Seconds) = warning at tunnels, blind bends and Junctions

# Pisces Pre-Use Check List

This list **MUST** be completed at handover of Pisces and given to HNA staff

Skippers Name:		Date:	Mobile:
<p>I confirm that I will give a full safety briefing (copies of which are on board) to all passengers and crew before setting off, and a lock briefing to lock operators at first lock. I Confirm that I have been given a copy of the Hand Book and that I will read the contents.</p> <p>SIGNED.....Skipper Date.....</p>			
ITEM	OK(✓)	N/A (✓)	Defect Reported
General exterior condition			
Fenders Fore / Aft			
Fresh Water Tank			
Fuel			
Engine oil			
Fan Belts			
Weed Hatch			
Stern Greaser / Stern Gland / Centre Shaft			
Tiller & Pin			
Bilge Pump			
Gang Plank / Boat Poles / Boat Hook			
Ropes:- Fore / Aft / Centre			
Mooring Spikes / Mallet			
3 Lock Windlass			
Watermate Key			
Lifebelt 2			
2 Fire Extinguishers &1 Fire Blanket			
Interior Lighting			
Toilet and Spare Blue			
Tunnel Light / Horn			
Gas			
Smoke & Gas Alarms			
First Aid Kit			
Interior condition			
Emergency tool kit			
Jump Leads			

# Pisces Inventory

		HNA	Skipper			HNA	Skipper
1	Kettle			2	Roasting Tins		
1	Tea Pot			1	Grill Pan		
15	Dinner Plates			1	Baking Tray		
15	Side Plates			1	Sieve		
15	Bowls			1	Mixing Bowl		
15	Mugs			1	Measuring Jug		
15	Knives			1	Colander		
15	Forks			1	Chopping Board		
15	Spoons			1	Washing up Bowl		
15	Tea Spoons			1	Drying Rack		
15	Plastic Beakers			1	Broom		
1	Knife Block			1	Dust Pan and Brush		
1	Steel			1	Mop and Bucket		
1	Scissors			1	Refuse Bin		
1	Fish Slice			2	Loo Brushes		
1	Grater			2	Sanitary Bins		
1	Ladle			1	Matches/Lighter		
1	Potato Masher			1	Axe		
1	Potato Peeler			1	Range Poker		
1	Serving Spoon						
1	Spoon with Holes						
1	Spaghetti Spoon						
1	Tin Opener						
1	Tongs						
1	Whisk						
1	Wooden Spatula						
2	Wooden Spoons						
1	Scissors						
2	Frying Pans						
3	Saucepans						
2	Stainless Steel Pots						
1	Milk Pan						

# The History of Pisces

Pisces, a Star-Class Middle Northwich craft built in Northwich, Cheshire in 1935, began her working life as a general carrier, with loads such as wood, coal, steel—indeed any bulk loads that needed transporting from one place to another.

During World War 2 Pisces gave valiant service in London's docks, acting as a fireboat to douse the cargo ships set alight by German bombers, thus helping to keep Britain's vital supply lines open. In the post-war years she was adopted by British Waterways Board who ran her until the 60s, by which time she had acquired a cabin & the loads had changed from inanimate cargo to ones of a human nature—a camping boat. She has an HR2 Lister air cooled engine with a very distinctive sound. Enter Hillingdon Council, in 1968 they purchased Pisces to enable trips to be made on the canals by community groups, as stated above. To try & calculate the number of persons that have been on Pisces trips since those early years is almost an impossibility, but it's safe-to-say that she engendered a faithful following as, over the years, many customers have commented to us that they have fond memories of their trips aboard her. So successful was she that, to keep up with demand from the youth service, another two boats were built, Gemini #1 & Gemini #2. The boats were moored in Cowley, some 150 yards above Cowley Lock for many years until the purpose-built HQ at Summerhouse Lane in Harefield materialised. Gemini #1&2 were sold to finance the building & purchase of Hillingdon Star, so Pisces & Star made the journey from Cowley to Harefield to start a new life further north, almost at the very edge of the western conurbation of London.

The wooden back cabin that had suffered the ravages of time has been re-constructed to convert this back cabin into a working museum, bringing canal history to life in a traditional setting. New steel gunnels were welded to her sides, which themselves were in need of wide-scale repair. We constructed a doorway through the engine room bulkhead to allow direct access to the Steerer position, avoiding the need for delicate footwork in traversing the gunnels. Also we carried out a series of necessary and worthwhile improvements to the engine compartment. These limited and carefully considered measures ensure that modern standards of safety are maintained without prejudice to the original design and appearance of this majestic and very proud vessel.

To celebrate her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2010 she was re-painted in her original two-tone blue and white colours as a mark of respect for her many years as a true and much cherished work-horse of the waterway, and taken back to where she was made “Northwich in Cheshire”

The year 2020 marks her 50<sup>th</sup> year of being a community boat. Pisces is without doubt one of the most hardworking narrowboat on the cut having been in constant use since she was made over 80 years ago.